by a savage brute. I felt the blows, but I am sure that my tormentors did not hear me moan. They dragged me downstairs and threw me, dizzy and half conscious, into the dungeon.

IN THE DARKNESS

I found myself in complete darkness, mud and water under my knees and hands. A hoarse voice called, "You, newcomer, step up. Follow the wall. It is dry here."

"Not very dry . . ." said another voice.

I heard clanking chains. An invisible hand touched my shoulder and led me to a comparatively dry spot.

There were seven of us in the round room under one of the towers. We sat for a time in darkness and silence. Then a quiet voice asked, "Newcomer, are you a political? You must be an educated man. Tell us something."

"What should I tell you?" I said. "I am no taleteller."

"I did not mean a tale," replied the voice. "Tell us something about books. We are all simple people. Tell us what is in the books that educated people read."

I searched my memory for some long story that would appeal to the imagination of my invisible listeners and decided on the history of the earth. Along with mathematics, astronomy and geology were hobbies of mine, and I started a popular lecture—or, rather, a series of lectures. From time to time the listeners interrupted me with questions.

Time ceases to exist in complete darkness. At irregular intervals, always unexpectedly, the door to the corridor opened and Belokos entered with two guards to count the prisoners. One guard usually carried a lantern. The air in the dungeon was heavy, it was difficult to breathe, and the guards did not stay longer than was necessary to count us. Once the flame of the lantern went out for lack of oxygen. Belokos and his commando rushed to the corridor and stood at the open door. "If they suffocate here, I shall be held responsible," he said to the guards. "Let the stinkers get air."

I spent six days or more, perhaps ten, in the darkness. Then I was transferred to a room in the tower.

THE TOWER

The towers of the Castle were originally designed for the most dangerous prisoners, and each room was connected with the hall by